

GEORGE  
CABOT  
LODGE  
POEMS  
1899 - 1902

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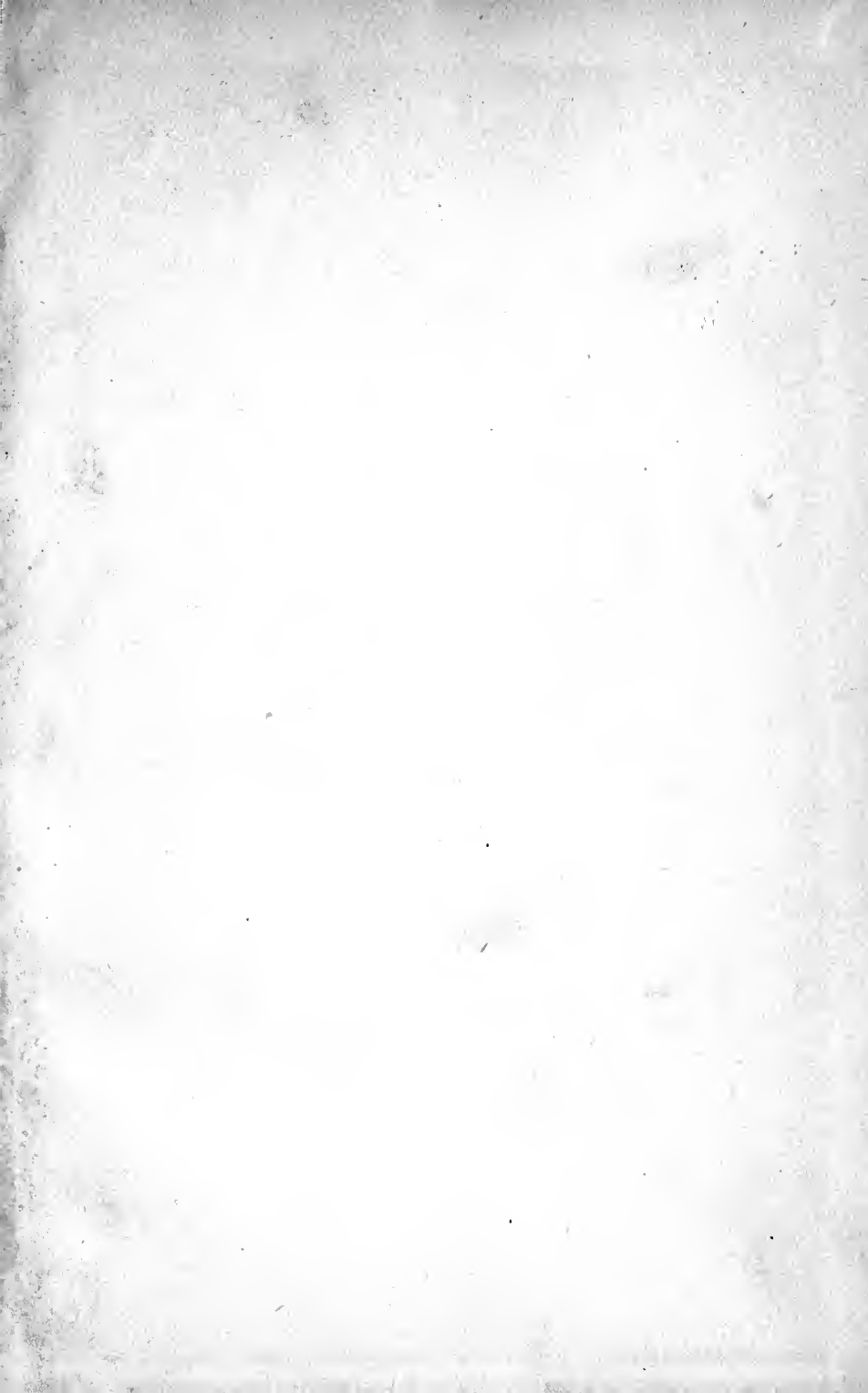


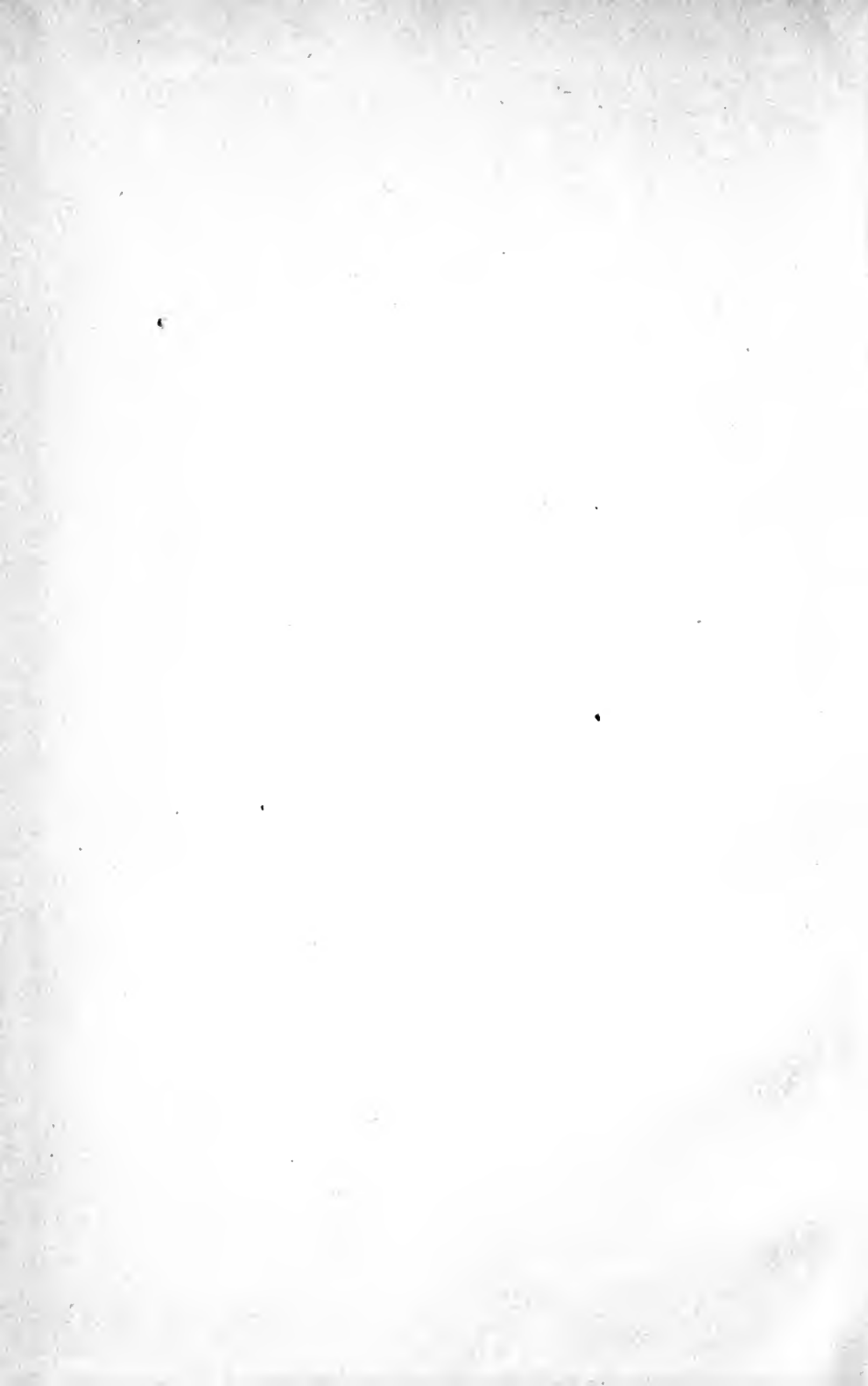
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POEMS  
(1899-1902)



GEORGE CABOT LODGE

POEMS

(1899-1902)



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TO THE  
MEMBERS OF THE  
AMERICAN  
ASSOCIATION OF  
SCIENTISTS



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TO W. W.

*I toss upon Thy grave,  
(After Thy life resumed, after the pause, the  
backward glance of Death;  
Hence, hence the vistas on, the march con-  
tinued,  
In larger spheres, new lives in paths untrodden,  
On! till the circle rounded, ever the journey  
on!)*  
*Upon Thy grave,—the vital sod how thrilled  
as from Thy limbs and breast trans-  
pired,  
Rises the springs sweet utterance of flowers,—  
I toss this sheaf of song, these scattered leaves  
of love!*  
*For thee, Thy Soul and Body spent for me,  
—And now still living, now in love, trans-  
mitting still Thy Soul, Thy Flesh to me,  
to all!—*  
*These variant phrases of the long-immortal  
chant  
I toss upon Thy grave!*



# OUTWARD



## OUTWARD.

Outward broad airs, the sea's unshadowed  
sweep,

And larger voice on shores of lovelier lands,  
Starred heavens of **vaster light and night** with  
sleep

Tender as **women's hands**.

Outward the grave processional of hours,  
Each a discovered joy, a solved surmise,  
Days dark in bud that ripening, fall like flowers  
Gardened in Paradise.

Outward! O throes resolved in mightier song!  
Splendour of nameless deeds, essential words,  
Merged in the large acceptance, in the long  
Pulse of the cosmic chords.

Outward, where every word and deed is fit;  
Outward, beyond the lies of name and  
shame,  
Of sin and ignorance the cause of it,  
Life's prison of fancied flame.

Outward! O heart, the secret solved at last!  
Love that enfolds, unites, and understands;  
Love like the sea, with equal waters cast  
On this and alien lands!

Outward! O free at last! O steadfast soul  
Calm in the poise of natural things! O wise,  
How wise is love!—only, beyond control,  
To pass with open eyes!



## THE VOYAGE.

Outward! Sail ever on thy mystic voyages,  
Cut loose, up anchor from the shores of  
thought!  
There leave in safety all the dull world's count-  
less captives,  
Seek thou the freedom only thou hast sought.

Thine are the prophets, thine the few, the poets,  
martyrs,  
Stung with the impulse of divine surmise;  
Thy chosen ventured while the millions feared  
and faltered,  
Realized the rapture, dared the great sur-  
prise.

Outward! For, ever as of old, the deep sea's  
distance,  
Ever new skies to lift and lighten, lie  
Far down the dusk of day-break from the  
shores proved pathways  
Pathless to perilous eternity.

Yea! tho' the friendly wharves are all aflame  
with faces,

Yea! tho' their anger rave in foolish  
sound,—

Outward!—Their hands would hinder but  
their hearts are fearful;

Leave them their fetters, Thou shalt not be  
bound!

What tho' they cry—"Time's hosts have trod  
our ways of life out,

Roads, charts and lamplight,—ours the val-  
ued prize,

The proved!" Thou sayest—"My goal how  
dim, my seas how trackless,

My risks how vast!" Then leave them to their  
lies!

Shake down the sails to catch the blood-red  
drift of sunset!

Haste! lest they hold thee slave among the  
slaves.

Thou shalt be outcast of their laws and scorned  
and homeless:

The sin the world blames is the sin that  
saves.

Outward! The sail full-breasted swells against  
the night-fall,  
And now the world where blind men lead  
the blind,  
The world of laws and lies, of safety and  
obedience,  
The prize, the conflict,—all is left behind!

Outward! O haste! The flushed fresh mouth  
of dawn is calling!  
Outward! O space at last! O light at last!  
Steer where the comrades wait thee, journey-  
ing still, still outward,  
Wise in a conscious and perfected past.

## A SONG FOR WAKING.

Ere the blossom of sun from the mystical bud  
of the twilight is tenderly, hugely unfurled,

Ere the lion of light from his lair in the womb  
of the shaken, green sea-shadows leaps  
on the world,

Ere the masterful mistress and mother of life  
is released as a child from the womb of  
the night,

Ere the echoing bell of the heavens resounds  
with the rush of the resonant pinions  
of light:

Ere the day is declared and the globes of the  
dew are filled full of the splendour of  
opal and pearl,

Ere the foam-lilies dropped from the lap of  
the storm are as roses that blush at the  
breast of a girl,

Ere the aisles of the forest are heavy with dusk  
and are sweet with the murmur and  
marvel of birds,

Ere the dreams of the slumber of earth are de-  
stroyed and she utters her hymn of in-  
effable words :

Thro' the drift of the derelict airs, thro' the  
wind-trodden seas that are windless and  
weary with foam,

On the strength of the shouldering tides and  
the roar of the reflux surge down the  
beaches of home,

Comes the dream of the darkness of light, the  
frail flush of the feet of the dawn down  
the ways of the sea,

Thro' the measureless sound of the marching  
of tides where the steeds of the tempest  
rode fiercely and free !

Comes the delicate rapture of crimson as mute  
and intense as the dream of a passion-  
ate deed,

Comes the miracle faultless as fire and fierce  
as a heart where desire is sown as a  
seed,

Comes the glow like a prayer on the lips of a  
prophet whose eyes are aflame with the  
vision of God,

Comes the flush like the solemn delight of the  
love that can waken a soul in the brute  
or the clod.

And the silence is rich with the promise of  
song as the face of a child in the still-  
ness of sleep,

And the pause of the perfect fulfillment is grave  
as a death on the midnight when sum-  
mer is deep,

And the joy is the joy of a woman, her love  
and the light of her face and the sound  
of her feet.

And the calm is profound as the calm of a soul  
risen freely from life with his knowl-  
edge complete.

Over exquisite wind-dappled meadows that  
cover the foot and are fresh as a night  
in the fall,

Where the airs scarce remember the rage of the  
tempest and darkness is deep round the  
world like a wall,

Let us forth, ere the skies are washed empty  
of stars as the wind-rippled floods of  
the day-spring run free,

Let us forth where the welkin is stately with  
sound and the headlands are held in  
the cleave of the sea!

Let us leap from the scattered sweet shadows  
of slumber and venture our lives on  
the charger of youth,

While the sunrise is closed as the lips of a  
girl ere the kiss of a lover has kindled  
her mouth,

Till the languid, low airs smitten shrill with  
our passage re-echo the thunder of hoofs  
as we ride,

Let us press down the perilous ways of the  
present our steed tho' he bleed 'neath  
the rowel of pride!

Let us press in the hidden wet ways of the for-  
est filled full of the shadows and  
sounds of the past,

Let us travel the fields by the River of Years  
till the ways of the waters are open at  
last;

'And our steed shall be staunch tho' he weary  
and wince at the spur, tho' his nostrils  
are purple with blood,  
For the craving of Soul and the power of  
Love, for the freedom of Faith and the  
friendship of God!



## THE GREEK GALLEY.

The sound of the sea, the sway of the song,  
the swing of the oar!  
Out of the darkness, over the naked seas,  
Our galley is come  
With a shiver and leap,  
As the blade bites deep  
To the sway of back and the bend of knees,  
As she drives for home  
Out of the darkness, over the naked seas,  
To the sound of sea and the sway of song and  
the sweep of oar!

The scarlet stars swing low to the ocean's floor  
Made silver and pearl by the slow resurgent  
sun,  
And the waters break  
To a leprous wake,  
As over the sea the ripples shake  
Between dawn and dark, as for life's  
sweet sake  
The battle of life is fought and won,

And evermore,  
 To the sound of sea and the sway of song and  
     the swing of oar,  
     We sever the sentient silences  
     With our wind and way, where over the  
     seas  
 The surf booms steady and strong on the  
     scented shore.

Over the sea's unfurrowed fields  
 The miracle spreads and the darkness yields.  
     O heart that breaks in the strain and stress  
     Of sinews bent to the tempered oak!—  
 The golden gates of the dawn express  
 Sudden and soft as a girl's caress,  
     A glimmer of grass and a flash of wing,  
     An echo of prayer to the censer's swing,  
 And the altar's pillar of purple smoke.  
     And over the spray that the rowers  
     fling,  
     Wide over the tide where the foam-  
     drifts cling,  
     As the rhythm of muscle and music  
     swing

To the sound of the sea, the sway of the song,  
     the sweep of the oar,  
 To the crash and cream of waves on the bounti-  
     ful shore,  
 The spring breaks scented over the sea!  
 With a leap of sunlight under the lee,  
     As she dips her side  
     To the masterful tide  
 And lists till the bilge distills through the cy-  
     press floor.

O, the lift of blade! O, the clinging and shift-  
     ing of naked feet!  
 The coil of muscle that stiffens and swells to  
     the delicate beat  
     Of breath in the nostrils, of blood in the  
     brain,  
 As the earth-smell steals to our sense again  
 From the pebble-blue beach where the shadows  
     lie wet and sweet!

We have fought in the noon for breath—  
 To the sound of sea and the sway of song and  
     the sweep of oar;  
 Our bodies would swing at the oars in death,

Nor the rhythm of muscle and music cease,  
 Nor the weariness end, nor the sad sur-  
 cease

Of sorrow absolve us: but evermore  
 Our bodies would swing to the pitiless oar  
     Till the goal was reached,  
     Till the galley was beached,  
     Till we tasted the spring in the forests  
         and pleached  
 Gardens and vineyards of Greece on the plen-  
 tiful shore!

The flurry of foam flecked red as the dawn  
     looks over the trees,  
 And ever the motion of song and the pulse of  
     ineffable seas  
     That empty and echoless break on the ex-  
         quisite balance of air,—  
 And tenderly winged on the morning, a per-  
     fumed and delicate breeze,  
 Where the scent of the sacrifice floats with  
     the distant refrain of a prayer,  
 Where the cry of a bird and the whisper of  
     grass and the lowing of kine,  
 Are borne thro' the thunder of waves and  
     the smell of the brine.

And behold! We are come, we are there, we  
     shall pass thro' the fringes of foam—  
 To the sound of the sea and the sway of the  
     song and the sweep of the oar—  
 And the galley be lifted and leap like our  
     hearts for the rest that has come—  
 A spot of sunlight rolls on the reeking floor!  
 She shall shiver and strike thro' the sun-  
     dered spray,  
 And the clean, fresh sand where the ebb-  
     tides play  
     Be gored and gashed with her eager  
     keel;  
     And our feet shall feel  
 The swash of sea and the crawl of sand  
 As we leap to land  
     And pause and kneel  
     To the sound of prayer,  
     While thro' the air  
 The dawn expands till the shadows are passed  
 And the noon is over the sea at last!

With our women and slaves, with our oxen  
     and vines, we shall pass from the roar  
 And the sound of the sea, the sway of the song,  
     the sweep of the oar—

And stand where the burden of spring on  
the brows of the hills  
Is heavy and wet—where the blowing of  
pipes and the running of rills  
Persist in our ears.—In the warmth of the  
sun and the wash of the wind,  
In the ceasing of struggle and peace of the  
mind,  
With the wandering passed,  
We are home at last!

## THE WORLD'S TOO LONG ABOUT US.

The world's too long about us!—Let us go  
 Far from the righteous and the ignorant,  
 The vacant phrases of familiar cant,  
 The trivial loveless women and the low  
 Abortive men, the fashions stale and slow,  
 The greed of riches and the crime of want!

Come! lest contentment dim the quenchless fire,  
 Come! lest we lose from life the magic spell,  
 The power of thought, the ceaseless miracle  
 Of day and night, the youth of love's desire.  
 Come! lest we wear the livery. take the hire,  
 And prove in virtuous platitudes 'tis well.

Come! lest we take the thralldom and the food,  
 Accept the hire and kiss the master's hand,  
 Or hear, obedient to the world's command,  
 Our praises from the Ciceronian "good";  
 Or feel the shame of being understood  
 By those we know can never understand!

Earth knows our bodies, heaven our conscious  
souls!

The world is ignorant of all but name;  
Come! let us fear its praise and seek its  
blame,

Take larger motives that ignore its goals,  
And blow a fire within life's smouldering  
coals

To scar its social erebus with flame!

Come!—We can feel, dilate with endless air,  
The journeying seas, or watch our Paris take  
New moods of laughter, or the sun-God  
shake,

Low down the Nile, the splendour of his hair.  
Extreme in joy, extreme in soul's despair,  
Come! Let us dare to go for sweet life's  
sake!

Life's choice is this: the world or all the rest.  
The heights are lonely and the depths are  
dark;

Haply too weak of soul I miss the mark  
And fall below the world's unloveliest  
Level of littleness—I say the best  
Is mine, I venture life's extremest test.  
No failures quench the Truth's eternal spark!



## LES BOURGEOIS.

Be silent! Let them laugh and lie  
Nor speak nor heed but come away;  
In truth they neither live nor die,  
More vain than gaudy flies that play  
And perish in the vital day.

By rule and custom, time and place,  
Secure in noise and littleness,  
They live and laugh and lust a space,  
Incurious of themselves lest stress  
Of truth annul their nothingness.

Their borrowed praise, their hired blame,  
Their timid platitudes, their greed,  
The virtue of their hidden shame,  
The vices of their sordid creed,  
'Are theirs to serve a social need.

Their crime then? None! Their lives are food  
To vainer things, and they shall seem,  
Afraid of sin, too weak for good,  
Once vanished, like a stupid dream  
That never was—and now my theme!—

Be something, good or bad! Be real!  
They are not,—we'll take issue here  
Against them!—not for base ideal  
Or murdered truth, but for their mere  
Respectability, the mood of fear!

## A SONG FOR REVOLUTION.

Tho' the red-litten cities are shameless and the  
rulers are guilty with gold,  
Tho' the lips of the prophet are flameless and  
the shrines of the sacrifice cold,  
Tho' the shadow of freedom departed lies deep  
in the paths where She pressed,  
Tho', a goddess, She grieves broken-hearted for  
the children who starve at her breast,  
Tho' the forehead forsaken of bay-leaves is  
bound with a circlet of blood  
And the sweat that the labour of day leaves  
brews the wine of the mercy of God,  
Tho' we lose all the loves that besought us, tho'  
our children rejoice in their chains,  
Still we cling, as our visions have taught us, to  
the faith of our raptures and pains!  
And tho' Nations forsake the desire and the  
faith of immutable things,  
Tho' the earth be subdued for their hire who  
rejoice in the cities of kings,

Tho' the whole earth be theirs for their pleasure,  
    and every man master or slave,  
Still the sea can afford beyond measure the inheritance perfect we crave!

We can pass where the sand on the shore is  
    made smooth as the breast of a girl,  
Where the waves whisper marvellous stories  
    and the tideways are lustrous as pearl,  
Where the crest of the breakers in onset subsides  
    in a welter of blood  
As the flame of the sword of the sunset is  
    plunged in the breast of the flood;

Where the sea-splintered lightning of noon  
    lies in the lap of the long afternoon,  
By the fire of the pharos of moonrise, with the  
    faultless, frail feet of the moon,  
Over meadows of midnight where starlight  
    lies scattered like dew on a lawn,  
Let us forth so we follow the far light of freedom,  
    the soul's light of dawn!

Let us go with the wind and the twilight behind us,  
    the rain in our hair,  
With a star on the brows of the shy night in ineffable  
    heights of the air;

The wide waters before us shall whiten, the  
    horizon that bound us be rent,  
And no longer our hearts as they lighten shall  
    grieve or complain or repent!

We have seen that the progress they praise is  
    of tears and enslavement and blood,  
Tho' they honor with blasphemous phrases  
    their crimes as the service of God;  
In their mines where the serfs they control  
    press, in their factories reeking with coal  
They must labor until they are soulless, and the  
    birthright of man is his soul!

Tho' rejected of men we seem friendless, yet  
    all nature itself is our home,  
For we come as the last of an endless proces-  
    sion and sing as we come!  
But they, faithless and cold to the kernel, with  
    their minds in dogmatic control,  
They have lost the divine and eternal strong  
    joys of the body and soul!

And we bear as our brothers before us the mes-  
    sage eternal and new,  
The exultant, unspeakable chorus of the souls  
    that are tender and true,

And our word for each comrade is, "Thee-  
ward all joys in the universe trend,  
"If thou darest with us to go seaward, on the  
seas of the soul without end!

"If thou darest go forth from the phrases that  
cheat, from the laws that restrain,  
"From the shrines where the high-priest who  
prays is untrue and the servant of gain,  
"Then the light and the love shall not perish  
but endure to illumine the years,  
"For the fire of rebellion we cherish is Promethean and ours by our tears."

It is naught if the loveliest spaces of earth bear  
the soilure of greed  
For a day or an æon effaces the purpose, the  
profit, the deed;  
It is naught if they bring us disaster, if they  
blacken the skies in our ken,  
But we weep for the slave and the master, for  
the stunted and loveless, the men!

It is naught if a man be defeated, it is naught if  
he suffer and die,  
It is naught if he starve and is cheated by the  
greedy who pillage and lie,

It is much if reduced to a fashion or bound in  
whatever control,  
His body is scanted of passion, or he forfeits  
the light of his soul!

And we whisper to all men and women, "Lo!  
the light is at hand, and the way,  
"Be it strange, be it guarded with foemen, is  
broad as the justice of day;  
"You shall no more be joyless or lonely, our se-  
cret shall amply suffice,  
"For man's world is a fashion and only man's  
body and soul are of price!"

## THE HERITAGE.

O, say in the splendour of days that await us,  
the scope and desire of midnights to be,  
The fruit of what powerful passions shall sate  
us, what Truths more effusive shall  
make us more free?

What new depths of the soul shall we seek and  
discover, what strength of the body,  
what heat of the heart?

In the dream of the seer, on the lute of the  
lover, what secrets shall yield and what  
melodies start?

Shall the days be more ample and florid before  
us, the large nights more pregnant of  
mystical birth?

What fresh voices shall peal what ineffable  
chorus, what beauty revive the old leg-  
ends of earth?



The old ramparts of thought, shall they fall  
and be shattered? The old barriers of  
Love, shall they splendidly fade?

Shall the heavy heaped dust of remembrance  
be scattered, our pleasures by loftier  
joys be repaid?

Since the rapture of Life is the longing that  
rages and Truth is the wisdom that  
kindles to flame,

So the judgments of God and the laws of the  
sages, man's virtue and evil, his praise  
and his blame,

Shall be fused in the Truth of what new reve-  
lation, dissolved in the floods of what  
limitless light?

As we forfeit our hearts to what new expecta-  
tion, what senses shall thrill to what  
nameless delight?

In what wise shall the lips of our new loves  
grow fervent, what dreamed-of caresses  
lie warm in their hands?

Than the Gods who made Sapho their priestess  
and servant, what lovelier Gods shall  
inflict their commands?

When the altars of Love are heaped up over-  
 measure, when the passion of love  
 grows intense as despair,  
 What embrace shall afford what unbearable  
 pleasure, on what breast, in the perfume  
 and dusk of what hair?

And the elder grave Gods we have chosen and  
 cherish, bright Gods of our youth that  
 were sumptuous and young!—  
 Must they fail in the light of new vistas and  
 perish as fail in long twilights the pulse  
 of a song?  
 Shall perfections so distant they seemed a de-  
 rision, the wild aspirations we dared  
 not avow,  
 Be revealed in a solvent new vastness of vision,  
 attained in a mightier moment than  
 now?

Then what holier shrines shall receive our ob-  
 lation, what visions reveal more ineffa-  
 ble skies?  
 As we pass from the creeds of our old adora-  
 tion what marvels shall wake a more  
 pregnant surmise?

What new virtues and sins shall complete and  
delight us, what tenderness thrill in our  
hearts like a song?

In what paths where what marvellous day-  
spring shall light us, what chorus of  
Heroes shall hail us along?

All the questions are vain yet the day never  
faileth to light the large dusk of the  
limitless past,

And desire forever in all ways availeth to bring  
all the largess we long for at last;

A new ecstasy wakes to a novel desire, to a  
vision more wise new horizons shall  
swell,

Tho' we will to ring round the huge heavens  
with fire or satiate such passions they  
know not in hell!

Tho' we will to be God all-receptive in heaven,  
yet our longing To Be is forever too  
small;

We are more than we know, as we ask shall be  
given, to ourselves and to only ourselves  
we are thrall;

With the sword of our will we may rend as a  
curtain the dusk of desires that wince  
and withhold,

Whatsoever we ask for the guerdon is certain,  
be it dust or the dawn-star, God's  
heaven or gold!

## THE PASSAGE.

Onward ever and outward ever, over the utter-  
most verge of the earth,

With ever before us the perilous vista, behind  
us the laughter and light of the hearth;

With the wind of the wilderness fresh in our  
faces, the rain in our hair like a chap-  
let of light,

As the silent, low shine of the dawn, like a dew-  
fall, is sifted and shed thro' the raiment  
of night.

And the airs shall be smitten in sunder  
Before us

With lightning and voices of thunder  
In chorus.

We shall pass over desolate places, strange for-  
est and measureless plain,  
And the noon shall relent and the spaces of  
midnight be severed in twain;  
Over meadows that murmur with fountains,  
where rivers like serpents lie curled,  
We shall pass to the wall of the mountains,  
crouched low on the edge of the world:  
Till the last low ledge of the lea  
Makes division,  
Till the wild, wide waste of the sea  
Fills our vision,  
We must journey in morning and midnight,  
we must travel in sorrow and mirth,  
Onward ever and outward ever, over the utter-  
most verge of the earth!

Onward ever and outward ever, over the utter-  
most verge of the sea,  
Out over the tremulous tides and the trackless  
waste ways to the wall of the firmament  
free,  
Fulfilled of the light of ineffable spaces, the  
echoless thunder of wind in the night,  
And broad in the burnished blue hollow of  
heaven the endless procession of dark-  
ness and light.

For the fire of the full moon shall waken  
 To find us,  
 And the hounds of the storm be forsaken  
 Behind us;

We shall on thro' the vistas uncertain, having  
 neither beginning nor end,

Tho' as folds of a fluttering curtain the deep  
 sea be shaken and rend,

Tho' the sea, where the foam-rivers run white,  
 be naked and weary and blind

As the breast of a shield in the sunlight, or  
 black with the scourges of wind:

Till the great green wall of the wave  
 Shall cover us,

Or the sweet spring grass of the grave  
 Blow over us,

We must on till we fall in our traces, we must  
 follow the dawn and be free,

Onward ever and outward ever, over the utter-  
 most verge of the sea!

Onward ever and outward ever, over the utter-  
 most verge of the Soul,

Out over the ages resumed in remembrance,  
 the priest's and the tyrant's relentless  
 control,

The puny divisions of evil and virtue, restrictions of men and commandments of God,—

O, ever the Soul in all paths and all places  
where straying or striving the Children  
have trod!

For the Great Gods who curse and defile us  
Shall fear us,

And all men who hate and revile us  
Shall hear us;

And the bonds of allegiance that fetter the  
spirit, the oaths of obedience sworn in  
the past,

Shall be words of the lesson of life we inherit,  
embraced, understood, superseded at  
last.

We are done with the Gods of our old adoration,  
we acknowledge they served in  
their turn and were fair,

But we go, for behold! after long preparation  
what no man has dared to discover we  
dare!

Till the Body and Soul and all time  
Shall be blended,

Aspiration and virtue and crime  
Comprehended,



We must fathom the sense and the spirit till we  
stand self-possessed of the whole,  
Onward ever and outward ever, over the utter-  
most verge of the Soul!

## DAY AND DARK.

Now the golden fields of sunset rose on rose  
to me-ward fall,  
Down the dark reverberate beaches clear and  
far the sea-birds call,  
Blue across the fire-stained waters, eastward  
thrusts the chuckling tide,  
Fresh as when the immortal impulse took the  
lifeless world for bride.

Now the shore's thin verge of shallows keep  
the tense and tender light,  
Now the stars hang few and faultless, dia-  
demed on the brows of night,  
Now the moon's unstinted silver falls like dew  
along the sea  
While from far a friendly casement softly fills  
with light for me.

So it ends! I reaped the harvest, lived the long  
and lavish day,  
Saw the earliest sunlight shiver thro' the break-  
ers' endless play,  
Felt the noonday's warm abundance, shared  
the hours of large repose,  
While the stately sun descended thro' the twi-  
light's sumptuous close.

Now the night-fall—Ah! I guess the immortal  
secret, glimpse the goal,  
Know the hours have scanted nothing, know  
each fragment hints the whole,  
While the Soul in power and freedom dares  
and wills to claim its own,  
Star over star, a larger, lovelier unknown  
heaven beyond the known!

## RETROSPECT.

Beyond the earth is sea,  
Beyond the sense is soul,  
Beyond this life a little sleep,  
Beyond the race the goal.

I know the earth is young,  
And time a little thing;  
When first the stars harmonious sung  
Thro' heaven, I heard them sing.

Full well I know that I  
Was there when chaos hurled  
Formless and fervent on the void  
The huge and pregnant world.

Sheer down the endless skies  
We took our furious flight,  
Our wings of flame flapped, vast and dumb,  
Against the ageless night.

Helmless and wild we crossed  
The eternal seas of space,  
And moored beside the sun and swung  
In our predestined place.

Pure as a distant song,  
Echoed from south to north,  
The strange first dawn came grave and strong,  
Gigantically forth.

The sheer black pinnacle  
Of sky grew vaguely blue,  
As down the cold, thin, empty airs  
The red light glistened thro'.

And when the last stars died  
About the noonday sun,  
And on the enormous distance fell  
Daylight's oblivion,

I saw green tendrils blur  
The acrid plains, the sea  
Suck down between the naked hills,  
Roaring immeasurably.

Then day retired, night fell,  
Frail breezes shook the air;  
The moon showed large between the stars  
Her void unfaltering stare.

Thro' all the perfect night  
Ringing with silver, I  
Stood in my human solitude,  
Wondering ineffably.

Then, in response, I heard  
A voice within me sing:  
"I know the stars are very young,  
"And Time a little thing!

"Always Truth waits beyond  
"Larger and more divine:  
"The immeasurable Past  
"And light and life are mine.

"Father, O Soul of Me!  
"Thy scope is never whole;  
"Always a new infinity  
"Lies waiting for the Soul!"

Beyond the earth is sea,  
Beyond the sense is soul,  
Beyond this life, a little sleep,  
Beyond the parts the whole!

## SONNETS.

## I.

Cut loose! Hoist sail! Leave the familiar  
shores

Of life! Drive out on love's enormous wind  
Far from the safe small pieties and blind  
Tangles of conscience! O set wide the  
doors

And throw the strong arms open utterly!

Go forth reckless with faith and unre-  
signed,

Thus only seeking shall you surely find  
The peril and rapture of true liberty!

Thus only shall divine discoveries

Stretch the vague margins of the conscious  
soul

And fire the peaks of more inclusive skies;

Thus may we burst the self-created bond

Of sordid fears and hear life's surges roll

On shores of truth that always lie beyond!



## II.

Would I were hopeful as the tender leaves,  
Would I were faithful as the myriad grass,  
Kindling conviction in the ways I pass;  
Would I believed as every flower believes!  
The pale wheat springs and flowers, the golden  
    sheaves  
    Serve in their turn—the Earth's religion  
    brings  
    Proof of the power and miracle of things,  
    That none are infidel and no thing grieves.  
No thing in nature grieves and all things die;  
    Yea! from their burial Life is born anew:  
    O faithful grass of graves!—perchance  
    when I  
Change to the earth's desire, my soul shall take  
    Thy lesson of faith and joy and still renew  
    My journey onward for the journey's sake!

## III.

The earth is glad of travail and laboring :  
     The flower the whole sun's kiss is spent upon,  
     The leaves light, as of sea depths smitten  
         with sun  
     And musical with incessant murmuring,—  
 Bound as a girdle, the strong sea's silver ring,  
     Where thro' and thro' the deep, clear hair of  
         night  
     Stars tread the chattering tides and swollen  
         with light  
     Moon walks beneath the slow dawn's fervent  
         wing,—  
 Earth, sea,—to them the large, fresh, passion-  
         ate deed  
     Of life is glad and wise—how wise is faith!  
     Life's harvest flowers, death sows the ex-  
         haustless seed :  
 We probe the intention till the soul has won  
     Vista,—awake at last! Yea! journeying on  
     Equal and wise and free with life and  
         death!

## IV.

How long the impassive feet of Time have trod  
The myriads and their monuments to dust!  
How long the frailest, loveliest leaves have  
trust!

How long life urges in the reeking sod!  
The flower is witless of a master's rod,  
The sunlight warms the unjust with the just,  
The he-bird, joyous in his vernal lust,  
Carols in native ignorance of God.  
And, when the travesty of God's control  
And human reason leave us at the last  
Naked before the all-receptive Soul,  
Incurious of the ends of life and death,  
Numb with the monstrous effort of our past,  
We pray the bird for joy, the flower for  
faith.

## V.

Most lone and loveliest star, in glimmering  
spheres

Of twilight hung, as tho' the lids of night,  
In one liquescent utterance large as light,  
Let fall the delicate silver of her tears;

Monotonous music mute to mortal ears,  
Vibrant as birds that cry across the bright  
Silence and thro' the distance tense and  
white,

Where loud as life the incessant dawn ap-  
pears.

Thou art, O star, how like a conscious soul  
Leaving the shadowy shores of life to blend  
Deep in the lustre of its native sea!

Or like, in heaven, the pure and liquid toll  
Of one unechoing bell to mark the end  
Of God's rule and man's infidelity!

## VI.

How many a wave, O shore of life, to thee  
Has flowed, and murmuring, teased thine  
    ignorance!  
How many a derelict from the winds of  
    chance  
Has signaled some unguessed eternity!  
The passion and pulse and power of all the sea  
Fills the thin foam with fierce significance,  
And thro' the sea-moods, to the deeper  
    glance,  
Pierces the same intention utterly.  
Still, from life's shores to sea-ward, can the  
    soul,  
Glimmering in dawn, spread out a wider  
    pool  
Of light and vision till shadows flow to  
    flame,  
As one by one we dare include the whole  
Of human change within our scope, nor  
    school  
Our hearts to virtue more than sin and  
    shame.

## VII.

Mine is the bellowing, all-receiving sea,  
Mine the long beaches blurred with drifted  
foam,  
Mine the blind earth, the human lights of  
home,  
The midnight shuddering, deepening end-  
lessly.

Mine is the world to-night! Yea! Mine shall  
be

Vistas and vaster worlds, a certain dower,  
When after faith, free love and conscious  
power,

Soul dares desire its own infinity.

Naught can be asked or given for all is ours:

Ours of all space the cold incessant miles,

Ours of all time the full, unstinting hours;

And ours the sea beyond, that round the warm

Shores of our being whiles will sleep and  
whiles

Breathe thro' the soul the epic voice of storm.

## VIII.

## THE POET.

He comes last of the long processional,  
Last of the perfect lovers, doomed as they  
To live ever more lonely day by day  
By all rejected and condemned by all.  
Hands stretch to hold him, passionate voices  
call,  
Bright lips beseech him,—yet he cannot stay.  
Treading in the large night his outward way  
He learns how much the crowns are spiri-  
tual.  
His heaven is godless since his faith is whole;  
No thing but finds in him a perfect love,  
No flower, no star but buds within his soul.  
Labor and sleep, the warmth of home belong  
To all but him,—he feels instead thereof  
His heart's blood smelted to the ore of song.

## ODE TO THE SEA.

Lure me, O musical motions of the sea,  
 Thou of the cosmic heart most mighty  
 mood!  
 And breathe beside me once again, O ye  
 Intimate whispers of the outlawed wind!  
 And grant, O Earth of long maternity,  
 While dawn grows golden like an infant  
 God  
 Who walks the young world's twilight nude  
 and free,  
 Thy latest child the rest he cannot find!

Still as I sought thee soul and flesh were fain!  
 Before the flower of sunset, one by one,  
 Scattered its petals like a golden rain,  
 Before the twilight clear as amethyst  
 Covered my lidless eyes, within my brain  
 Seemed, in the lasting silence of the sun,  
 All life as interludes of uttered pain  
 That scar the lips of Heaven's mute  
 Agonist!



I am the heir to Time's exceeding dower :

Ease me, thou minstrel of the changeless  
theme!

Now while the midnight yields the mystic  
flower

• Of moondawn, violent as a sanguine stain,  
Like love's desire that in night's loneliest hour  
Dawns thro' the empty twilight of a dream,  
Mend with thy music-threads of faith and  
power  
Life's raiment ruinous with surmise and  
pain!

Moon-like the motion of thy rhythmic cries

Has lured how many a sea of tears to flood!  
How many a time thy sacramental sighs,  
Swelling the daedal veins of silence, bring,  
In eastern chambers where the darkness dies,  
Thro' Death's half-fallen veil of solitude,  
Desirous tears, sad eucharist of eyes  
Last opening over earth's essential spring!

Soon shalt thou feel the miracle of light

Soft as the distant music of a shell;  
Thy voice that creeps around the world to-  
night

Breathes from long vistas of deciduous  
 years,  
 Since first thy bitter waters void of sight,  
 Sterile of seasons, on earth's valleys fell  
 As fall like darkness in the soul the bright  
 Burden of life's insuperable tears!

Soothe me! For when the sundawn gilds thy  
 tide,  
 Poised like love's lotos on life's perilous  
 stream,  
 When flower by flower the earth grows open-  
 eyed,  
 Almost I would to God my soul were  
 drawn  
 Where body and soul seem nearly to divide,  
 Till, lapsed from life's dark labyrinth of  
 dream,  
 I ceased in darker solitudes and wide  
 Eventual silence of the ripening dawn.

Louder than cymbals, on thy silver breast  
 The gold of sunrise falls—our loneliness  
 Ends with the shadows and the vain unrest  
 Of life returns like long-familiar pain.

Grant me the soul's deep truth thy voice expressed,

The power to live in human tenderness,  
Yea! tho' I pass, repass, and never rest  
Still bound to life and death's immortal  
chain!

Then shall the seas of soul be like to thine,  
Endless in stately vistas drowned in sun;

Then shall I take thy perilous call for sign,  
Then shall I leave the world's familiar  
shore

Seizing the soul's inheritance for mine;

Then, while the huge horizons merge to one  
All-welcoming sphere, O then the Ship Divine  
Lost in the daybreak shall return no  
more!

## ODE TO THE EARTH.

## I.

O tireless earth! O earth of long desire!  
 Old earth whence now the gradual leaves  
     transpire,  
 Earth of eternal seasons, let me feel  
 The folded flower of thy returning spring  
 Thrill with the urge of life's divine appeal!  
 Grant me, O earth, the faith thy seasons bring!

Thro' silent airs, from sky to sky,  
 The effluent tides of darkness pour,  
 With foam of fire against the sunset's shore;  
 And now, as one by one the bird-cries die,  
 Singly thine ancient silences redeem  
 Spaces that verge a sea of sleepy sound,  
 And, 'stablished thro' the immobile dusk, they  
     seem  
 Like song but lately ceased, while on the  
     wound  
 Of daily life descends the balm of dream.

## II.

O earth across thy sentient sleep,  
Like silent maidens, one by one,  
Meseems thy countless days, dead daughters of  
the sun,  
Their unforgetful journey keep.  
Meseems beneath the masque of night,  
Clear in thy dreams, their large, remorseful  
eyes  
Always are overflowed with quenchless light;  
While, from their cataract of golden hair,  
Falls an ethereal fragrance and their shattered  
skies  
Are swayed with elemental tides of air.  
For surely when the world is fain  
Of thy desire that never dies,  
Thy toil of child-birth stirs again  
The mighty legend of thy memories,  
Till, even as when the feet of Lilith pressed  
Thy fruitless sod and roused the tardy spring,  
Pale in thy florid sleep, thy daughters bring  
Thrills of remembrance yearning in thy breast,  
And this to-night is stirred, as one by one,  
Rain-robed or bright with raiment of the sun,

Like some processional of barefoot boys,  
 They move across thy dream and all their pain,  
 Their gifts, too generous, and their splendid  
     joys  
 Seem like loved voices lost and heard again.

### III.

Surely as, when the firmamental airs  
 Grow, in a warm and lovelier noonday, sweet  
 With flowers thy fruitful bosom bears,  
 Forth from thy vistaed memories flow  
 Thy life's unnumbered days that tread with  
     ghostly feet  
 Thy large and dreamful slumber, so  
 Seen in the truth of thine essential mood,  
 All things that were return and none can die  
 Save for the ends of life. God knows if I,  
 Tired with all the task of time,  
 Died at thy breast, my cold and pulseless blood  
 Would stir to feel the essential ichor climb  
 The world's wide uplands, or beside  
 My cheek the winds grow warm, or on my  
     mouth the sweet  
 Savour of sunrise, or against my naked side

The thrust of earliest grass, the chill of dew.  
 Yea! even my mere mute flesh would wake  
     anew,

O earth of graves and flowers, as thou dost  
     take

The burden of new birth for mere life's sake!

#### IV.

Grant me to know thy larger love! If I  
 Always must go, beneath the self-same sky,  
 Thro' life and death and can no more depart,—  
 Grant, if I wisely serve thy large commands,  
 That rivers of thine own rhythm drown my  
     heart!

For now meseems my life is grown,  
 Vain as a shattered bowl  
 To hold the essential vintage of the soul.  
 Change me from small endeavors crazed to win  
 Mean ends for aims whose littleness is sin  
 To moods profound, effusive, all thine own;  
 Till, flower by flower I understand  
 As day by day the miracles expand!

## V.

Now spring from seaward blows, anon  
The winds grow cold as one by one  
They take the withering leaves,—thro' storm  
and calm

Thy lips are flowing with the eternal psalm  
Of moving seas, but still beneath the masque  
Of seas and seasons in their tireless task  
Thy mood is silence and thy gift is grace!  
Tho' endless years replenish and efface,  
Thou art as one whose soul beneath the test  
Of human agony and human strife,  
This restless interlude of life,  
Is conscious of eternal rest  
In spheres whose very scope is peace!  
Thou sayest that life shall never cease,  
Yet now I dream that death has ceased to be  
• And life has ceased; Yea! Life appears to me  
A bowl of Lethean wine whose margin's curve  
Is burned and bitter with the eager kiss  
Of myriads tortured by the thirst they serve.  
While in my dreams thy natural pieties  
Seem as the phases of the soul that is  
But neither lives nor dies!



And when at last my visions fade to this  
Level of lawn, and when thy silences  
Are mightily 'stablished, as the emphatic hand  
Of darkness stays the cries of sleepy birds  
And turns the golden breezes blind and bland,  
Then all my dreams, desires and words  
Depart and leave me silent with the deep  
Meanings of silence; thro' my darkened mind  
Light buds, as now, thro' tides of warmer wind,  
Stars blossom on the night, and life seems large  
as sleep.

Then idly, tenderly, my hand  
Falls on thy flowers still fresh with happy rain  
And wise with tears I seem to understand  
The purposes of pain!

## THE JOURNEY ON.

## I.

My lips shall kiss thy brows!  
 Thy blood—now in my heart perchance the  
     pulse of it!—  
 Shall fall upon my face from all the thorns.

Of their dead lives who killed and felt the  
     scorn,

Thy pity,—all its justice, vista, faith,  
 How utterly dim, unguessed, or briefly seen  
 As tho' a starred night thro' a wall's interstice  
     glimpsed or sea-view caught between  
     the crouching hills,—

When once, in some long-hence, prepared ar-  
     rival,

Realized and known by me, in me comprised,  
 Shall round the soul's slow spheres and lift a  
     larger horizon!

Then all the strewing of light in all thy ways,  
 (Now even I glimpse thee by the self-same  
     light)

Shall flow between our eyes incessantly;  
 Then as my lips gleam crimson from thy brows  
 And feel thy lips—the comrades kiss at last!

## II.

Long hence thou shalt acclaim me!

In retrospect of mine how many a god!—  
 Fauns, stream-side nymphs, in twilights of  
     mid-May

Shy hamadryads and reluctant ghosts,  
 Ishtar in Babylon who trod  
 Hearts of fierce lovers in her wine-press out,  
 Setebos, Hapi and the phallic Min,  
 Thoth with a mystic wisdom, Iahveh, Baal,  
 Ra, and the glorious, strange moon-father Sin,  
 Golden Apollo with the throbbing throat,  
 White Aphrodite in the mid-seas blue—  
 These, and of all my mythic infancy the dim  
     and elder gods,  
 Gods that no legend hints, no indirection  
     proves,

I, journeyed on in paths by them untrodden,  
 On seas unhinted in their charts, their indica-  
       tions, prophecies,

**After** an age of years turning, resume, inter-  
       pret:

These, now with negligent arms about my  
       neck,

Grave heads against my breast, deep eyes to  
       mine,

Come face to face at last, at last acclaim me!

So thou, Essenian of the later Gods,  
 As these my childhood's aspirations one by one,  
 After long journeys done, dreams realized,  
       thoughts explored, faint indications  
       proved,

Meet me and mate me with deep, quiet eyes—  
 I knowing we all are equal Gods at last—  
 And kiss my naked brows and send me forth  
 Vaster by them, by love and knowledge of  
       them—

So thou!—the pause returned, the vaster task  
       resumed, the distance measured,—

Surely my soul shall find thee somewhere wait-  
       ing then!

Surely mine eyes, sphered to how vast a light,  
Shall tally thine, surely my neck shall feel  
The strength and tenderness of thy sweet  
pierced hands,

Surely thy brows shall share with mine—we  
equal Gods at last!—the sacred bur-  
den of thy human blood,

The while thy sad, pierced feet, in all my ways,  
Equally go with even pace with mine, by open  
roads, by open seas vistaed before us,  
still untrod, uncrossed by thee or me,  
As we together take the long, long journey on!



FOR E. L.





## FOR E. L.

## I.

She stands before me till the space grows void,  
And round her form the desert's sterile heat  
Throbs with the tread of strong, impassive  
feet

And song in fanes She builded and de-  
stroyed.

The tideless waters swell and fall, the beat  
Of sunlight thrills along her limbs and glows  
On jade and turquoise, and her even brows  
With myrrh and natron seem forever sweet.  
She, child of mightier days and larger loves,  
Stands like a silence in the sound of life,  
And recent things about her beauty seem  
Vain and unlovely as our human strife;  
Wise and ineffable as Truth She moves  
As moves a great thought thro' a foolish  
dream.

## II.

She moves in the dusk of my mind like a bell  
with the sweetness of singing  
In a twilight of summer fulfilled with the joy  
of the sadness of tears,  
And the calm of her face and the splendid, slow  
smile are as memories clinging  
Of songs and of silences filling the distance  
of passionate years.

She moves in the twilight of life like a prayer  
in a heart that is grieving,  
'And her youth is essential and old as the  
spring and the freshness of spring;  
'And her eyes watch the world and the little,  
low ways of the sons of the living  
'As the seraph might watch from the golden,  
grave height of his heaven-spread wing.

She moves in the darkness of Time from the  
centuries large as her spirit;  
From the magic of elder religions when the  
epic desires were strong;

'And the old, grave glories that She, of the living,  
alone may inherit  
Flow back from the harp of the past like the  
notes of ineffable song.

She moves thro' the trivial days in the might of  
the peace of her presence;  
And, sweet as the death of a child, in the  
still high places of thought,  
Her soul in the hunger of life is appeased in a  
perfect florescence,  
'Apart from the shadows and dust that our  
little desires have sought!

## III.

Why are you gone? I grope to find your hand;  
The light grows secret as your tenderness;  
My tears that fall for utter loneliness  
Seem sad as sunset in an alien land.  
Old simple words that you could understand  
And only you, are striving to possess  
My lips with utterance and their weariness  
Burns with the fever of a vain command.

Why are you gone? The large winds, sea-  
ward bound,  
Tell of long journeying in the endless void.  
Why are you gone? I strain to catch the  
sound  
Of footsteps, watch to see the dark destroyed  
Before your lustrous fingers that would  
creep  
Over my eyes and give me strength to sleep!

## IV.

Pour down thy hair between the world and me!  
Between myself and my exhausted soul  
Spread, in the dreadful vistas where my  
goal  
Saddens and fails, thy love's euthanasy!  
Fold me away from Time and let me be  
Silent and ceased from bitterness, be thou  
Tacit as childhood and thine ivory brow  
Thoughtless, and be thou tender utterly!  
Strength, give me strength to spare the futile  
tears!  
Give me the consciousness of something  
proved:  
Faith, wisdom, personal and briefly true.  
I sift the scant earned knowledge of my years  
Like dust between my hands, and all I loved  
And hoped and dreamed dissolves and blends  
to you!

## V.

She turned the falling light to fire,  
Dull fire throughout her sombre hair;  
It seemed She phrased the world's desire,  
Desire that woke with fervent prayer  
Thrills of a secret wonder everywhere.

Her eyes caught splendours from the sun,  
Vague airs grew warm about her face,  
She saw the fire-stained ripples run  
And sing to sleep the smouldering space  
Of sunset and sink whispering on her trace.

Height over height the skies caught fire:—  
She watched the red contagion flow,  
The wide, wild wings of flame aspire  
Till heaven uplifted seemed to grow  
A huge, domed sapphire paved with crimson  
snow.

Her lips were still and marvellous,  
But, like a lute whose silence sings,  
Her hand fell warm in mine and thus  
Told me imperishable things :  
She held my senses as a perfume clings.

My mind was like an ancient town  
Of shadows carved in moonlight, there,  
Like dreams thro' latticed casements blown,  
The twilight of her endless hair  
Brought stately visions, sweet and sad and fair.

'Along the towers and walls of thought  
They hung bright banners flown with  
song,  
The crooked, unlitten byways caught  
Their fires, and, as they passed along,  
My dull, wild heart woke strangely and was  
strong.

So fire fell back from sky to sky,  
Night deepened down the purple sea :  
She turned her solemn eyes and I,  
In wonder and in certainty,  
Still touched her hand and still it sung to me.

## VI.

Thy breast is stainless as a star, thy hand  
Is calm and white and slow and thou dost  
    come  
Sweet as a long-remembered song of home  
Heard thro' the twilight of an alien land.  
Thine eyes are pure and still, they understand  
More than our thoughts surmise, and stately  
    dreams  
Hover about thee and thy presence seems  
Calm with a ceaseless custom of command.  
With memories of thy face the ways of time  
Are splendid, and my hours divinely stirred  
With tremor and silence as of unshed tears.  
Thou dost resume, as tho' the sea's sublime  
Music were uttered in a single word,  
The warm magnificence of earlier years.



## VII.

O murmur and passionate silence of to-night!  
 Earth of sublime arrival!—Let there creep,  
 Like music thro' the muffled gloom of sleep,  
 Tremours of Life's imperishable might,  
 Whether from airs that range the steep starred  
     height  
 Of heaven, or where the delicate dew is deep  
 On grass and flowers, or where the bird-cries  
     leap  
 Loud down the pathways mute and bare with  
     light.  
 Fabric of night, O easeful rest, O airs  
     Kissing Her cheek, O flowers that feel Her  
     feet,  
 O, Life, O earth's impetuous utterance!—  
 We stand to-night the fit and faithful heirs  
 To Life's inheritance,—the power, the sweet  
 Strong motive, and the Soul's ecstatic  
     trance!

## VIII.

Star of the sumptuous dusk and silent air,  
Thou loveliest child and latest-born of night,  
Jewel that binds the solemn brows of light  
Swept by its lustre of luxurious hair;  
O star of sundawn like a thread of prayer  
Weaved thro' the fabric of a song of bright  
Echoes and passionate notes of life's de-  
light:—  
O throbbing heart of heaven, unstained and  
bare!—  
Thou, in thy twilight, art as tho' her hand  
Dawned thro' the glamour of a gorgeous  
dream;  
And as to me her loveliness is shed  
Thro' depths of ancient time, I see thee stand  
Exalted and thro' endless space thy beam  
Fall pure and steadfast on the world I tread.

## IX.

## I.

She moves beside the leaping sea,  
Along the beaches fledged with foam;  
The winds go seaward wearily,  
The waves seem children straying home.

The golden breath of day retires  
Between the crimson lips of cloud,  
She seems, amid the smouldering fires,  
Like starlight thro' a burning shroud.

I say "The toiling sea is old,  
"The function lasts, the form is change;  
"Yon wave that falls in splintered gold  
"In every drop is fresh and strange.

"Thine eyes are deep as fluent pools  
"Of starlight—Yet despite of thee  
"The world despairs of death—O fools,  
"Behold the fresh and stainless sea!

"The sea that felt the loveliest far  
 "And eldest God of earth transpire,  
 "Her flesh more radiant than a star,—  
 "The sea is young and cannot tire!

"The myriad waters run in ways  
 "Where moved a million tides before,  
 "So you aspire thro' all my days  
 "The same yet strange for evermore!"

## II.

The sunset spins its splendid skein,  
 The sea-birds pass with fearless eye,  
 The daylight falls in golden rain  
 To gardens of a vaster sky.

I say: "Like some sonorous bell,  
 "Flame-forged to call for war or prayer,  
 "Debased to chime a vulgar spell  
 "And phrase the pain of vulgar care,—  
 "So they, for whom their lies suffice,  
 "Who fear the splendid task of love,  
 "Who choose the world and pay the price,  
 "Are dead,—their lives are proof thereof!

"But now they seem as something gone  
 "A long, long while, and I may stand  
 "And hear the calm sea-monotone,  
 "And watch thy face and touch thy hand."

## III.

The stars come few and full as tears,  
 The dark absorbs her fold on fold;  
 She seems a song of earlier years,  
 A myth the lips of heroes told.

She turns, the twilight clothes her shape,  
 The sands she treads seem moist with blood;  
 Measured and low from cape to cape  
 Sea-music thrills the evening's mood.

I say "The wondering-up of love,  
 "The float of incense and the gloom  
 "That warmed of old thine altars, move  
 "About thee like a dull perfume.

"And like a ship of glimmering pearl,  
 "My heart adventures far to sea:  
 "The urge of wind, the breakers curl  
 "Seem promptings of infinity.

"Day dies and night along my trace,  
"Thy hair, the gloom and glow thereof,  
"Surrounds me, and thy solemn face  
"Is dawn across the seas of love!

"Behold thou art like sleepy wine  
"In all my sense, and now at last  
"Thy human hours of life are mine  
"And all thy strong, sonorous past!"

## X.

Ours is the day of soul-despair,  
The glimmering faith, the scantèd sight;  
But thine the dim, deserted night,  
And, dark as moonlight thro' thy hair,  
The stately, solitary air.

Ours are the years of foolish strife,  
Of small desires and smaller gain;  
But thine, beyond the toil and pain,  
Inert, unstirred by death or life,  
The changeless Truth that proves us vain.

Ours are the trivial joys, the tears,  
The toil whereat our lives are priced;  
But thine, with nothing sacrificed,  
The harvest of unnumbered years,  
The silence where the soul appears.

Ours is a short, sad sentience, ours  
Brief time and then forgetful sleep;  
But round thy face thy memories keep  
Strange vigil, and the lotos-flowers  
Of Egypt scent thy living hours.

Ours are the life and death that seem,  
 Ours is the race, but thine the goal,  
 And thine the calm, unhindered soul  
 That holds the dreamer and the dream  
 As notes in one harmonious theme.

We damn and praise, we crown the few  
 With power and fame—a fading wreath;  
 In thine alembic Life and Death  
 Unite: beyond our partial view  
 Thy calm eyes know that all is true!

Thy vision sphered to vaster skies,  
 Thy breast that keeps, serene and strong,  
 The pulse of earth's eternal song,  
 Thy hands that stir not and are wise,  
 Thy face of epic centuries,

Thy soul that sees beyond the tomb,  
 Thy faith of wise and perfect love,  
 Thy heart that time is lyric of—  
 They know thro' life and death we come  
 Thee-ward like children straying home.



## XI.

Thine is the silence of a night of mist,  
Thine is the wonder of a night of stars,  
Thine is the body, a solemn eucharist,  
And thine the face, the eyes no shadow  
mars  
Save of thy hair the twilight pale as amethyst.

Thine is the voice, phrased echo of the sea,  
And thine the mood of statues black with  
moon,  
Staring, inert, with eyes too tense to see,  
Eastward thro' deserts desperate with  
noon;  
Thine is the day-spring of the world's eter-  
nity.

Thy breast is perfumed of forgotten flowers,  
Thy dreams and destinies are old as youth  
That thrills, in chorus of memorial hours,  
The longing and the laughter of thy  
mouth;  
Thy soul is proud and calm with long-immor-  
tal powers.

Thine is the portent of a deathless thing,  
Thine is the passion of a mortal change,  
Thine is the love—Ah God!—to cleave and  
cling,  
And thine the lover, violent and strange,  
To tune the lyre for thee, despair and break the  
string,  
Lest song turn discord tried beyond its  
range!

## XII.

Thine is the joy of life's transcendent hours,  
 Thine is the grief of childish memories,  
 ' Thy footsteps seem to fall on fragrant flowers,  
 Strewn for the feet of grave Divinities;  
 Thine eyes recall forgotten pieties.

Deep in thy breast the sacred perfume lingers,  
 Breathed from the lotos that were wont to  
     hang  
 Rose o'er the sistrum in thy rhythmic fingers,  
 When thro' the shrine's mysterious twilight  
     rang  
 Thy voice and all the unseen respondents  
     sang.

Thine are the powers of Gods that now are  
     nameless,  
 Still on thy face there seems to fall the glow  
 Of fires that flared on shrines for ages flame-  
     less,  
 Still where the diadem pressed thy faultless  
     brow  
 Heavy with gems, the dimples linger now.

Age after age the myriads live and perish,  
 Their's the harsh conflict and the sordid  
     gain;  
 Thine is the wisdom souls alone may cherish,  
 Thine is the truth that heals the essential  
     pain  
 Of time and change and makes death's con-  
     quest vain.

Life is a spark the night of death encloses,  
 Somewhere is sunrise if the soul is sooth;  
 And thou in life's brief hour of thorns and  
     roses  
 Show us the fashion of a deathless youth,  
 The solemn portent of a final truth.

ISHTAR.



## THE SONNETS OF ISHTAR.

## I.

I am the world's imperishable desire;  
 Life is because I will, for hope of me  
 Life is, nor all the dark depths of the sea  
 Could quench mine eyes' light nor my body's  
     fire.

Fresh hyacinth and the violent rose suspire,  
 The black clod breaks to green eternally,  
 Sap thrills to parturition the naked tree,—  
 Of all things living I only cannot tire.

I am the world's interminable sin;  
 Yea! In my power and lust beyond control,  
 Things mortal wage the war of life and win.  
 For me the slave defies the master's rod,  
 And while the antique pride swells within  
     his soul  
 The man reclaims his liberty of God!

## II.

My face lives always in the quenchless light,  
Frail gold of twilight burns across my breast,  
The red dusk girds me and my limbs are  
pressed

In warm, wan shadows deepening down to  
night.

My hair, red gold on brows of faultless white,  
Inspires earth's children to my fatal quest;  
Youth's passionate face in mortal hope of  
rest

Grows blind against me, wearying of my  
might.

With ravenous lips men scourge my lustrous  
flesh

And crowd the quivering dusk with name-  
less sin;

Death takes them, still insatiate, from my  
mesh.

Viewless, my feet pash down the one who dies,  
While, sprung aloft from earth he festers in,  
I watch the last-born laughing in mine eyes!



## III.

Once was my name as fire, and once my wine  
    Flushed in the veins of youth, and once the  
        strong,  
The wise, the lyric, leaped beneath my thong  
Of love and hailed me human and divine!  
Mine was the world's confessed desire and  
    mine  
The echoing thunder of the seas of song,  
Priests, virgins, youths—a florid, sumptuous  
    throng—  
Gave me luxurious service at my shrine!  
Now tho', bereft, I seem perchance as one  
    Smothered in night whose memory keeps the  
        flush,  
The fire and huge transcendence of the sun,  
Still, in the apostate world, my fight I know  
Is won, and still the lips of manhood crush,  
And still the pained blood throbs thro' limbs  
    of snow!

## IV.

For me, the eldest and the loveliest God,  
For me and for my equal happiness  
The woman aches with sweet maternal stress,  
The slow seed breaks beneath the reeking  
sod.  
For me the strong, swift feet of dawn are  
shod  
With fire, for me the flowers' frail petals  
press  
Fearless and faithful, and warm winds ca-  
ress  
The violet sea-ways where of old I trod.  
For me the long, resounding years return  
With gradual seasons, and the stately sun  
Shepherds thro' void infinity his brood;  
And only thro' my knowledge man may turn,  
To larger consciousness the soul has won,  
Leaving his outworn body for my food.

## AD SERVAM.

## SAPPHICS.

## I

Day through, night through rest never gave its  
    guerdon,  
Life unfolded never its heart's rejoicing,  
Sleep stood wrapped in visions of endless  
    waking,  
    Pale and relentless.

## 2

Dawn spread fire, the moon with its meagre  
    twilight  
Died, the trees grew full of fresh sound and  
    shadow;  
Bit with flame the implacable night, the sleep-  
    less  
    Shrivalled like parchment.

## 3

Day with dumb, white hours like scourges  
    smote me,  
Drop by drop day's river of sunlight drenched  
    me,  
Sight and sound day's weariness wrought  
    upon me,  
        Wrought as with iron.

## 4

So was night shed silent as sifted ashes,  
Dim and sweet the invisible spring suspired,  
Voiced with song, earth's passion of parturi-  
    tion  
        Toiled in the twilight.

## 5

Over earth the shadows were shod with silence,  
Night descended ample and rapt and faultless;  
Still was rest withholden and, pale and lidless,  
    Sleep overglanced me.

## 6

Sleep!—Dark page unlettered in life's sad  
volume—

Not for me thy cession of ceased remembrance,  
Not for me thy dreamless, impassive mercy—  
Thou hast denied me!

## 7

Fierce as fever blurred with fantastic fancy,  
Night through, Life, with resonant lips convulsive,

Violent hands and eyes of incessant silence,  
Smote and enslaved me.

## 8

All my flesh cried: "Symbol of starved desire,  
"Pain of all pains weariest, thou hast cursed me  
"Now with tears and now more cruel with  
laughter,

"Hurt and caressed me!"

## 9

Then I cried to Death with exceeding anguish,  
 Prayed her thus—"O, Angel of tender wisdom!

"Wrap my brows in infinite night, in final  
 "Folds of thy cere-cloth!"

## 10

Then dislimned Life's image; the brawl and  
 babble  
 Ceased; yea, Life, the implacable Life relented,  
 Turned and, mute as tho' to disclose its meaning,  
 Leaned to caress me.

## 11

Then I saw the shadowless eyes, the scarlet  
 Lips of laughter, lust and of little whispers,  
 Whispers low and languid with fierce  
 dominion—  
 Life was translated!

Cried I then: "O, pity for me, O mighty  
 "Gods of altars white as the limbs of lovers"—  
 Then She laughed and suddenly, burned and  
     broken,  
         Soul was defeated!

Thro' me smote her silence of stolen secrets,  
 Dear, too dear for words and too sweet for  
     music,  
 Till She grew, in subtle and grievous longing,  
     Fervent as bloodshed.

Then I saw the glamour of limbs uncovered,  
 Saw the fresh, frail curves of her body broken,  
 Saw the mouth, the eyes everlasting vision  
     Moist with her passion.

## 15

Soul was spent, flesh severed with sharp de-  
 sire,—  
 Flame on flame the print of her paces smote  
 me,  
 Yea! the song and sway of her eager body  
 Surged in my senses.

## 16

Long I lay immobile, in monstrous struggle,  
 Endless waking, weariness tense as harp  
 strings,  
 While the sobbing pulse of her blood against  
 me  
 Beat thro' my body.

## 17

Briefly then I knew why the sleepless demon  
 Life, endured with sorrow and sound incessant,  
 Knew why all the veins of my body filtered  
 Wine for her thirsting.



## 18

Even Death, the goal and delight of living,  
 Wrapped with earth's thick shadows, the sea's  
     dense silence,  
 Death, I knew, as Life in the day and night—  
     time,  
         Paled and grew sentient.

## 19

She, I knew, beneath my unlifting eyelids,  
 Dark with dust or blind with the weight of  
     waters,  
 She could still, with fiery fingers, sever  
     Death from its shadow!

## 20

Yea! the cool, kind fingers of Death would  
     kindle;  
 Sleep is scared and darkness too weak to wall  
     me;  
 Naught conceals my soul from her soul's de-  
     sire,  
         Slave She enslaves me!

## 21

So that now my body and soul in grievous  
 Love cry out—"O God, I would choose her  
                   nervous  
 Fierce caress, tho' even the wings of slumber  
                   Closed to enfold me!"

## 22

Tho' my sleepless hours like fire and fever  
 Burn my brain and all of my body suffers,  
 Tho' my soul is famished, my heart leaps  
                   out in  
                   [Wild supplication;

## 23

Cries—"O thou, Implacable Aphrodité,  
 "Thou, whose feet flow flame and whose laugh-  
                   ter lightens  
 "Down the trackless ways of the heart where  
                   bright blood  
                   "Burns on thy traces!—

## 24

"Thou, of Gods most pitiless, sumptuous, sanguine—

"When I burn out body and soul and perish,

"Let my cinders, sifted thro' some sad twilight,

"Fall in Her pathway!

## 25

"Where Her feet fall, yea! and beneath Her paces

"Let me lie in dust and with dust be mingled,

"Thrilled as now to feel of Her flesh the burden

"Bruise me in passage!

## 26

"There, tho' stamped and scattered, Her feet could thrill me,

"Yea! till flowers from out of my dust transpired

"Still to lure Her fancy and still to feel Her

"Mine as she crushed them!"



## TANNHAUSER TO VENUS.

I have learned the inevitable destinies  
 By sheer endurance of thy careless love!  
 Yet with a human and so needful hope,  
 A desperate guess, I dare confront thy will  
 And task with doubt thy flushed divinity:  
 Hear me! O Goddess, hear my last surmise!

I have watched thy face and seen the seasons  
     pass,  
 And now I know that memory cannot be  
 Where death is not nor any mortal change.  
 Thou art immortal, therefore all thy life  
 Is now,—the hours go by and leave no trace!  
 O monstrous thought! Would I could ask  
     thee where  
 And how they fare, the insatiable men,  
 Lovers of thine whose blood besmeared thy  
     feet,  
 Whose wild hearts perished as in fire, whose  
     bones

Gleam white as starlight in the paths of time!  
 O where's it passed, the strong processional,  
 The young men and young women pale as fire,  
 Life's desperate mariners who glimpsed thee  
                   forth—

Pharos that lamped the starless night of time—  
 And sought thee even on death's engulfing  
                   seas?—

Tell me of them! Thy brows are pure of  
                   thought!

Yet had thine epic lovers of yesterday  
 Lips and strong hands more fierce than even  
                   are mine;

Their violent will and weak humanity  
 Suffered as mine to feel thy deathless youth!  
 Then tell me—for, by heaven, my extreme  
                   plight

Lies bare before thee—if such men who strode  
 Young in the young world are lapsed away  
 Body and soul leaving no trace at all,  
 Then where for me, for me who once forswore  
 My sweet Lord Christ, the strong and stainless  
                   God,

Is triumph or hope or any tenderness?  
 Am I more mighty than so much of time,  
 So mighty and so wilful of my cause

That, by extreme desire, I may contrive  
To give thee mortal memory and pain and  
tears,

Feel thy heart falter and reduce to death  
The fashion of thy memorable flesh?  
Is this my only hope? Certain it is  
My whole life, harnessed to thine endless task,  
Toils without recompense, a merest tool  
Serving the vast monotony of fate;  
Certain it is that through eternal time  
No death can make the sight of my dazed eyes  
Grow bland or cool my fingers of thy feel!  
And therefore, drifted in the dreadful past,  
I shall be left a derelict on the shores  
Of thine oblivion that bear, I know,  
Wreckage of all the years and of all men!  
Certain it is—unless—O give me power  
And light! For in the midnight of despair  
I seem to glimpse the dawn of a huge hope  
That fires a pathway to my utmost goal!  
Not thine the power! I go from thee to me!  
Mine is the task—to teach my human soul  
The vastness of the immortal mood and thus  
Lift my fierce life to immortality!  
O hope great beyond all hope yet not vain!  
Haply I fail—yet I have known thy love

And served with life the soul's divinest end  
Since the extreme of all things leads to truth.  
Therefore I am content. Lift up thy hands  
And pour thy golden cataract of hair  
Over my face, then kiss me through the  
coils!—

The frailty of my heart that does thee wrong,  
Memory, and grief for human joy and pain  
Shall cease. Behold me fit to bear thy love!  
I will no more desire the sea-wind, cool  
At sunrise, nor the lesser joys than Thou:  
The clasp of friends and the low lights of  
home!



## TWILIGHT.

Deep in thy lap I lay my head,  
Deep in my soul thy words resound;  
Thy lips where mine so lately bled  
Gleam like a wound.

Now, in the sad reluctant light  
The passionate silence of thy mood,  
I feel thy robe's perfume, and night  
And solitude.

Till in the solitude I feel  
The breaking heart, the dazzled brain  
Pulse with a longing tense as steel  
And more than pain.

More than all pain and all delight,  
All laughter and convulsive tears,  
More than all sleep in all the night  
Of endless years.

Thy robe's perfume is deep and warm,  
The dusk is deep and sad and low :  
I cannot save thee from love's harm  
Nor let thee go.

I have nor strength nor will to save  
Thy life from my desire or me.  
I hold thee, Mistress still and Slave  
Eternally !

## SONG.

I am the soul of desire,  
 The pleasure, the passion, the prayer;  
 O, when shall my love for thee tire?  
 Beloved, thou art fearfully fair  
 And I am the soul of desire!

I am the soul of desire,  
 I call with the tones of the sea,  
 With the infinite yearn of the sea.  
 I am thrilled with my love as a lyre  
 Is thrilled with the songs that transpire  
 For love, and I thirst as a fire  
 For thee!  
 For thy indolent hands and thy hair—  
 O beloved! thou art fearfully fair  
 And I am the soul of desire!

I am the soul of desire,  
O where shall I find thee?  
My love shall consume thee entire,  
My passion shall bind thee!  
For a day and a night and a morrow,  
Thy body and soul shall be mine  
Till the laughter of love and the sorrow  
Are shed thro' thy senses like wine.  
Where thy bosom is bare  
My love shall suspire;  
Thou art fair, O beloved, thou art fearfully  
fair!  
And I am the soul of desire!

VARIATIONS.



## SONNETS.

## I.

Strong saturation of sea! O widely flown,  
Far winds of fall, your litanies of pain  
Moan like the music of a wild refrain  
Heard thro' the midnight of a feudal town!  
Young night is lipped with jasper where the  
blown

Burden of evening lights intensely wane,  
And, shuddering seaward from the tawny  
plain,

Vague fold on fold the enormous dark comes  
down.

Gusty and fervid as the sleepless sea  
The passionate fancies of a formless fear  
Spring in my nervous brain like monstrous  
flowers;

The night, the wind-chant work their will of  
me,

And thoughts like death-bells echoing far  
and near,

Toll for life's lost, irrevocable hours.

## II.

How many a life must thou the journey keep,  
 O soul, thro' sexual seasons of the years?  
 O heart, how many a harvest of thy tears  
 Shall life's sharp sword of unfulfillment  
 reap?

The breath of dawn shall blow—haply with  
 tears!—

How oft, O heart, O soul, before the deep  
 Darkness and still eternity of sleep  
 Bring natural justice for life's long arrears?

Ah! when my rose of life is ripe to fall,  
 Pray God I sink thro' gardens of the sun  
 Till the dead fingers of oblivion

Constrain my heart, and there lie over me  
 The tideless waters and the eventual  
 Darkness of death's unlit, unlifting sea!



## III.

Come home to me at last! Come home to me!  
Bring me thy youth of tears and great desires;  
Frail round thy tired head the music tires,  
The music shed between the stars and sea!  
While still thy youth is echoing with its free  
Love-songs resounding like a storm of lyrics,  
Come with thy deeds and dreams;—and  
thro' the fires  
Of wisdom sift the ash of memory.  
Come home to me at last! Life whispers  
“Come!”  
Yea! thro' the mist of passions sad with loss,  
Strong in the sumptuous dusk, the light of  
home,  
The light of soul where thou must journey,  
lays,  
While spring is sweet in all the old dear  
ways,  
A splendour and a sacrament across!

## IV.

Hush child! Be still and give thy fingers rest,  
Thine eyes the darkness, and thy lips that  
press

Hard on the lips of life with fierce caress,  
Ease from their hunger and thy guideless  
quest.

Ask of the vacant eyes and stirless breast  
Of life's last angel, pale Forgetfulness,  
Peace and release from thought's eternal  
stress:

She, of life's violent, fervent Gods, is best.  
Peace child! Beneath her hand the fretful  
flame

Of long desire grows frail and faint as  
dream:

The immediate life is alien to despair.  
Held on her heart seem life and death the same,  
And nothing is at all and all things seem,  
And if life dies thou shalt not even care!

## V.

Then cried the song of Life: "The flowers  
that fall,

"Spendthrift of perfume, shall return again

"Fed by the tireless earth and fragrant rain:

"Far down the glimmering sea the musical

"Lips of the dawn repeat their clarion call;

"Always the heart shall kindle to regain

"Love's young desire whose very strength is  
pain,

"For life is love and love is best of all!"

Then breathed an elder music: "I am peace!

"Peace of the silent soul, sphered in such wise

"That no thing lives or dies, is pleased or sad

"In me, where hope and prayer and struggle  
cease!

"Wise with my light thy calm and steadfast  
eyes

"Beholding death shall not be even glad!"

## DEATH IN YOUTH.

Thy lips grow cold against the lips of death,  
And peace shall come:—be mild and un-  
afraid!

Then, in the silence, like a tender breath,  
Life's bloom of fever on thy cheeks shall  
fade

As now the sunset's weariest saffron slips  
Over the moveless pallor of thy lips.

What tho' the lips of love are wet with tears?  
Life was, thou sayest, magnificent and mine!  
Youth was possessed of dreams, the abundant  
years

Thrilled like the freshness of a native wine!  
Behold! The hope of life is death, the  
goal  
Death that at last leads outward to the  
soul.

Haply forgetfulness shall come. Behold!

Day is a dream that haunts the elder night.  
Still is the earth so young and thou so old,

Mute with thy memories flashed like shafts  
of light

Thro' rain-swept days forlorn with beaten  
bells,

Thy memories near and real as miracles.

'As Life is stern be merciful and mild,

Solemn with joy as Life laughs loud with  
pain,

Silent as life is shrill.—O dying child,

Be all life is not, then was life not vain

Since soul proves victor when the fight is  
fought

And peace returns, profound and void of  
thought.

Banish the keen regret, the foolish tears,

Salt on the kiss that burned thy longing  
mouth!

Wisdom shall soon be perfect: all thy years

Harvest blown ashes of the gods of youth.

Now shall thy grief refrain, thy passions  
cease:

Silence has come and in the silence peace!

Thou must forget or else 'twere vain to die,  
Death with thy memories is not death at  
all;

Passion and pain and pleasure, thou and I,  
Life and its longings, must, beyond recall,  
Cease or unite or merge and death must  
come  
Like seaward wind that takes the rain-drop  
home.

Death shall forget tho' life's immortal power  
That gave thee strength to bear thy human  
fate

Suffer and strive. Thro' death the mystic  
flower

Of soul expands until thy youth's wise hate  
Of life has utterly passed in love away,  
While death prepares the spiritual day.

## LULLABY.

Sleep, ah! sleep in the light of the moon,  
Sleep, ah! sleep in the shadow of night,  
For the hour of waking is soon, how soon!  
And swift are the feet of light!

Sleep, ah! sleep in the light of the stars,  
Sleep in the lull of the viewless airs,  
For you wake to the world and its pitiful wars,  
The flesh and its sordid cares.

Sleep, ah! sleep in the hush of the heart,  
Dreamless, forget the return of strife,  
When the curtains of shadow are stricken apart  
On the pitiless drama of life.

Sleep, ah! sleep in the light of the soul,  
In the measureless strength and the timeless  
peace;  
Sleep! and be free of the mind's control  
In the prison of time and space.

Sleep, ah! sleep in the endless ways  
Of the shadow of Death, in the cool, kind  
earth,  
Till the dark is dissolved in the golden haze  
Of the Dawn of a greater birth.

Sleep! for haply a night will come  
Where laughter is silent and none shall weep,  
Where the Soul after infinite travel goes home  
At last to an endless sleep.



## 'AFTER DEATH.

She said :

Where shall my Soul be comforted,  
My Body be satiated  
Since he is dead ?

She said :

Since He is dead  
Where shall my lips be fed that blushed and  
bled  
Against his lips, and where my fingers cling,  
My arms enfold, my voice thrill whispering ?  
My slow white hands shall fling  
Over what secret, where,  
The shadow of my hair ?

She said :

Because the Man is dead  
To Thee I yield my soul, Lord God.  
I thought he could not die  
Leaving the vistas of his life untrod ;

I thought the mere desire of love sufficed  
 To thwart Death utterly,  
 For this how gladly soul were sacrificed!  
 Now He is dead I learn thy litany,  
 Lord God, and tame my lyric throat to prayer.  
 Once, for his kiss, my lips were red,  
 Now pale with tears they taste thy eucharist,  
 And all my hair he loved, my sombre hair  
 Lies sweet and heavy on the feet of Christ.

She said :

Lo! he is dead, Lord God, my love is dead!  
 Now, leaf by leaf,  
 Summer is fallen, earth grown mute and deaf,  
 And winter rigorous above his grave.  
 In heaven the angels have  
 Thy stars for choir and all thy sons for song,  
 They live before thy face,  
 Glad in the sweet suffusion of thy peace.—  
 My love is dead; Lord God, I do him wrong,  
 Where he lies hid  
 Lonely beneath his coffin-lid,  
 To pray thy grace in heaven,  
 Nor even  
 Can I by thee be comforted  
 Since He is dead.

She said :

Yea! tho' my love be dead,

I know that never sleep

Has shed her shadows on his lidless eyes;—

Always I wonder if the dead can weep!

The desolate wind is cold above his head,

The wall of night impervious where he lies

And shrill with withered things that agonize

As tho' his buried body changed to cries,

As tho' he called to me and said :

“My lips are jealous of the flesh of Christ

“Thy lips have tasted in the eucharist,

“Yea, of the heavy strewing of all thy hair

“On Christ's sad feet!

“My hands are jealous of thy sweet

“White fingers cold in attitudes of prayer.

“My heart is jealous of thy naked breast,

“Crimson where late the altar's marble pressed,

“Where once I took my rest;

“And in the violent ways of love I trod

“My Soul is jealous of thy God!”

She said :

The stars of heaven are white with song,

The Sons of God forever young;

Dark is my love, O Lord, my love is dead!

Lonely beneath his shroud he cannot rest  
 Save where thy lilies fade against my breast.  
 Lord! it would do him wrong  
 And prove me faithless, if in Heaven  
 My soul grew pure and calm with God;  
 If, in the ways of good he never trod,  
 My heart were comforted.

She said:

I choose the seven  
 Sweet sins of love instead!

She said:

Summer has died because my love is dead,  
 Winter is acrid as his sleepless eyes.  
 Yet shall the earth wherein his body lies  
 Thrill to the season's sun and soon be riven,  
 Till Life, desire and dream of death,  
 Leap forth and climb the hills of heaven  
 And earth grow violent with spring  
 That shall fling  
 On the beating of her breath  
 Foam of fresh flowers to the stainless sea.

She said:

Like the eternal spring, eternally  
 Shall love persist in my dead Love and me,  
 And Life, the elixir whence all love is fed,

Shall thrill between us so we cannot sever.  
Lord God, we loved once and forever!  
For both of us  
Love is more marvellous,  
Whether alone beneath the coffin-lid  
Or lonelier and more desperate amid  
The glad familiar ways of earth we trod,  
Than Heaven with all its stars and hosts of  
    song,  
With all thy sons immaculately young,  
And Thou Lord God!

## WOMEN.

## FIRST.

## I.

She said: "O take me! Let my life become  
"Part of your pleasure. As the rose that leaf  
"By leaf falls scented from the crimson sheaf  
"You loved, even so, until my life is numb  
"And bare with giving, till the total sum  
"Of joy my life contains; to serve your need  
"Is spent, till all the music of my reed  
"Is played to please you, till you leave me,  
dumb—  
"So am I yours! to love you till you tire  
"Of love. I give so little!—yet the whole:  
"The best and worst of me, my body and  
soul!  
"O take me! Yours the nobler part, to take  
"Unrecompensed my prodigal desire  
"That pains me and would kill me for your  
sake!"

## II.

He said: "Enough! I take you and repay  
    "Nothing you give, but waste your sacrifice;  
    "I let your body and soul alone suffice,  
    "Your fierce love's largess lure me for a day.  
"Held in my power your soul shall cease to  
    pray,  
    "Your lips forget their pieties to entice  
    "My lips, and death at last shall film with ice  
    "Your desolate heart once drained and cast  
    away.  
"Come to me! You shall utterly be turned  
    "Into my pleasure, till my satiate sense  
    "Sickens to see you, till your flesh is burned  
"Dry in my service, till the soul you staked  
    "Against a careless kiss is lost, till hence  
    "I drive you, with the thirst you nourished  
    slaked!"

## III.

She said: "Thank God! Beloved, I merely ask  
 "Sufferance for love and me. My soul? I  
     stake

"It, swift to lose the bauble for your sake,  
 "To spill the liquor as I break the flask!"

She held the cup: then suddenly the masque  
 Shattered before him, and the woman, real  
 And soul-transfigured with matured ideal,  
 Faced him—divine to meet her mortal task.  
 As sunlight breaks thro' vistas grey with  
     rain,

The breathless truth broke briefly on his  
     brain.

He paused and felt her fail to understand.

She, desolate, shuddered watching him de-  
     part;

The miracle of love's divine command  
 Filled him, the gospel of the human heart!



## SECOND.

## I.

"Sweet from my sin I rise before you, rise,  
    "Wild as the vision and savour of the sea,  
    "Bland as the shadow of sleep's euthanasy  
    "Shed between burning lids and aching eyes!  
"Clothed in love's fire that damns and purifies,  
    "Mistress and slave, I yield me utterly,—  
    "Yours by the gods my love reveals to me,  
    "The gods my pitiless passion crucifies!  
"Love for love's sake my body is born again  
    "Thrilled with a new virginity, my soul  
! "Lends my desire the dignity of pain.  
"For you my lips are fire, my naked breast  
    "Profound as sleep and heavens of splendour  
    roll  
    "Over me, shattered with divine unrest!"

## II.

He said, "I take you. Yet the laughter slips,  
 "Mocking your sacrifice. Be still! The  
 phrase

"Is vain since sense with equal joy repays

"Loss of the soul we crush between our lips.

"Where's soul, my Mistress, when thy finger-  
 tips

"Drip wine till candles wither blaze by blaze,

"And down thy breast no song can fitly praise

"Pale drop by drop the ooze of daylight  
 drips?

"Why vex the mind? Why ponder—'Mine the  
 gain.

" 'Her gold against my dross;—the sacrifice

" 'Damns in acceptance—Heart must yield  
 the pain

" 'Of Heart due reverence, give the greater gift

" 'Denial?' To scruple so were over-nice.—

"Drown me in all your hair my fingers lift!"

## III.

"Heart to my heart," She cried, "and mouth to mine!

"Lie close! I feel you like the pulse of life!

"Desire has pained my senses like a knife:

"Lie close, that I may know my body thine!

"Surely the pangs of love are all divine,

"And haply tho' my ways of love be dark

"Their depths may kindle with the saving spark!

"At least my incense floats before the shrine!"

"Give me thy lips!" he cried—and then his mind

Suffered with truth. He said, "My soul was blind!"

"And mine," She said, "Till love disclosed the light."

He fell beside her, "Speak!" he cried, "For me,

"For me the loveless—where is hope?" And she

Soothed him as tho' a child who wept for fright.

## 'AT DAYBREAK.

I marked the hours beat by beat  
And felt the silent night depart :  
I held her, dead against my heart,  
Beside the loud, incessant street.

Across the daylight drenched with rain  
I heard the world's familiar strife,  
My fingers held the pulse of life  
That ran the shaking scale of pain.

Her body, bruised with love's embrace,  
Grew cold, and where her lips were red  
The dawn disclosed them grey and dead :  
Her eyes were dumb—I kissed her face!

I kissed her tacit face and laid  
My cheek on hers and caught her hand,  
And guessed if God would understand  
And find the joy of sin repaid!

Beside the loud, incessant street  
I kissed her mouth and held her bound  
Between my violent arms and found  
Her mouth intolerably sweet.

I held her close, Ah! close to me  
And kissed the scarlet ring that clasped  
Her throat, where all my fingers grasped  
And crushed her life out utterly.

I kissed her lips, her cheek, her hand,  
My mouth was bitter salt with tears,  
And she was dead.—If God appears  
I wondered, will He understand?



## THE FINAL WORD.

Hear me! I say to you—"This love of ours  
Can never be forgiven; nevermore  
Shall I, in peace and silence, pass my door,  
Sad with October sun and scattered flowers,  
Unhaunted of thy memory as before.

Nothing is virgin where thy feet have trod  
The byways of my inmost heart, and where  
My Soul stretched flowers to catch the sky-  
ward air,  
Thy hands have sown with chaff the fields of  
God.  
I know thy love is loveless as despair.

I thrilled in soul, God knows my body fired,  
Kindling thy perfect body, for the food  
Whose sweetness proved pain sweet and  
evil good,  
Till Life could no more bear what life desired,  
Until the lips of life were crushed to blood.

Now there is no forgiveness. Go or stay—  
I cannot care, my love has been so great!  
I am too tired now to love or hate;  
While hour by hour I see, and day by day  
Life's tears roll down the marble face of  
fate!"



## TO C. L. G.

The old days come near to me like dead women  
    with pale and tender hands,  
The gold of their hair shakes down about my  
    face,  
And the light of their eyes is tawny and sad  
    like the light of large, calm sunsets,  
And their silence seems as a fragment of eter-  
    nity.

The old days come near to me and thy presence  
    is ever among them,  
The presence of thy childhood fresh and dear  
    and dead,  
Thine infancy and mine!  
Linked in a living memory, sad as love and  
    death are sad.



THE SONG OF MAN.



## THE SONG OF MAN.

O come out with me to the New Gods, I have  
fathomed the lies of the old,  
And the pillars of Paradise crumble and the  
ashes of Hell are grown cold.  
I have striven and lived and remembered thro'  
the range of the numberless years,  
Until strange as a dawn in the midnight the  
goal of my seeking appears!

I have dared in the spirit's conception, I have  
shaped with the might of my hands,  
Were the dreams of my ecstasy mortal? Yet  
godlike I wrought their commands!  
In the twilight of temples I builded, by the  
flames of the altars I fed,  
I have trembled and wondered and wor-  
shipped, yea, bled as the sacrifice bled!

I have blinded the Soul's aspiration with torture and triumph and pain,  
 I have died for a word, for an idol, for an idol,  
 a word I have slain,  
 In the fear of a merciless master I have bent  
 like a slave to the rod,  
 I have turned in my anger and questioned of  
 God and the judgments of God.

I have minted in marble and music the gold of  
 the heart of my youth,  
 And a maiden's desire has brought me the feast  
 of the fruit of her mouth.  
 I have folded my love as a mantle over limbs  
 that were naked for this,  
 I have broken my heart on a lute-string, and  
 bartered my soul for a kiss.

I have lived with my boys and my women for  
 lust and the laughter of lust  
 Till the Love-Goddess, mortal in marble, was  
 shattered to shards in the dust,  
 And when Life unrelenting renewed me and  
 the soul of me suffered for food,  
 I have waked to a new revelation, I have canted  
 of evil and good.

I have damned and divided in judgment, I have  
     'stablished the bounds of my blame,  
 I have tempted the soul with a vision, I have  
     menaced the flesh with a flame,  
 Till the voice of my God in his anger was like  
     thunder of wind on the sea,  
 Till I cowered and sinned and was secret, till I  
     longed and was feared to be free.

Till, too weak to face God in his heaven, too  
     timid to dare him in hell,  
 I defiled him with empty observance and I  
     cheapened his name to a spell;  
 With a blasphemy cynic with safety, with a  
     cowardice born of my greeds,  
 With the slime of respectable falsehood, I fash-  
     ioned a God to my needs.

I have lied in my soul as I muttered the prayers  
     of the priests that I paid,  
 I have lied in my heart as I sold it, I have lied  
     for my heart was afraid,  
 I have lied to the priests and the people, I have  
     lied to my body and soul  
 All the lies that the meanest of sins pays the  
     meanest of virtues for toll!

Then I sickened of lies and discovered in  
breathless amazement—at last  
Soul and Body, to-day and to-morrow released  
from the ghosts of the past—  
That, washed clear with the tears of my man-  
hood, song-bright with the poems of my  
youth,  
Wonder-wide with long dreams and desires,  
my vision was trained for the Truth!

Yea! the silence of time and its changes have  
left not a God that was mine,  
Yea! my fashions of faith have been faithless,  
Yea! my heart has been drained of its wine,  
Yea! the lips of my women have withered, and  
for gold I have minted my blood,  
But at least I have learned thro' the ages all the  
lies of the world and of God!

From the Syrian glades where the perfect, pale  
woman grew mortal for love,  
From the vortex of chaos with darkness shed  
under and round and above,  
In the depths of the twilight of Asia, in the  
myriad ways I have trod,  
I have tried all the fashions of living and served  
all the phases of God.



I have merged in the spirit of Brahma, I have  
prayed by the stream and the tree,  
I have seen how She rose as a portent from the  
bitter, blue ways of the sea,  
In the name of the wise Galilean, by the sign of  
a merciful God,  
I have plundered, enslaved, and smeared over  
the sin with the silence of blood.

My blood from the altars of Ishtar has flowed  
to the foot of the Cross,  
It has dripped from the dewlaps of Seket and  
Venus has laughed at my loss,  
I have burned in the gardens of Nero, I have  
died in the circus at Rome,  
And the wine of God's mercy I prayed for was  
meagre and bitter as foam.

I have served all the alien masters still-born  
from my folly and fears,  
I have laughed till I wept in derision, I have  
wept till I laughed at my tears,  
And I cry "Thro' the range of creation and  
time I have tested the whole,—  
"Then come out with me to the New Gods, the  
Great Gods, Body and Soul!

"To the Gods who are sure and sufficient, who  
are free and more fatal than Fate,

"Who can tally the love of a virgin or the heart  
of a man in his hate,

"Who are wise with a perfect remembrance,  
who reject not a creed nor a crime,

"Who compassionate all, who interpret the  
ways and the wonders of Time!

"Who have builded and broken all laws of the  
Heaven and Earth, who are free,

"Who have lifted the seals from the sunrise,  
made pregnant the womb of the sea,

"Who have scattered the phantoms of heaven,  
wrecked the thrones of the world and  
their spell,

"Who have sown and reaped harvest of flowers  
in the fire-waste deserts of hell!

"For my God is the friend that I cherish, and  
my God is the woman I love,

"My God is the Spring on the hillsides, the Sea  
and the marvel thereof,

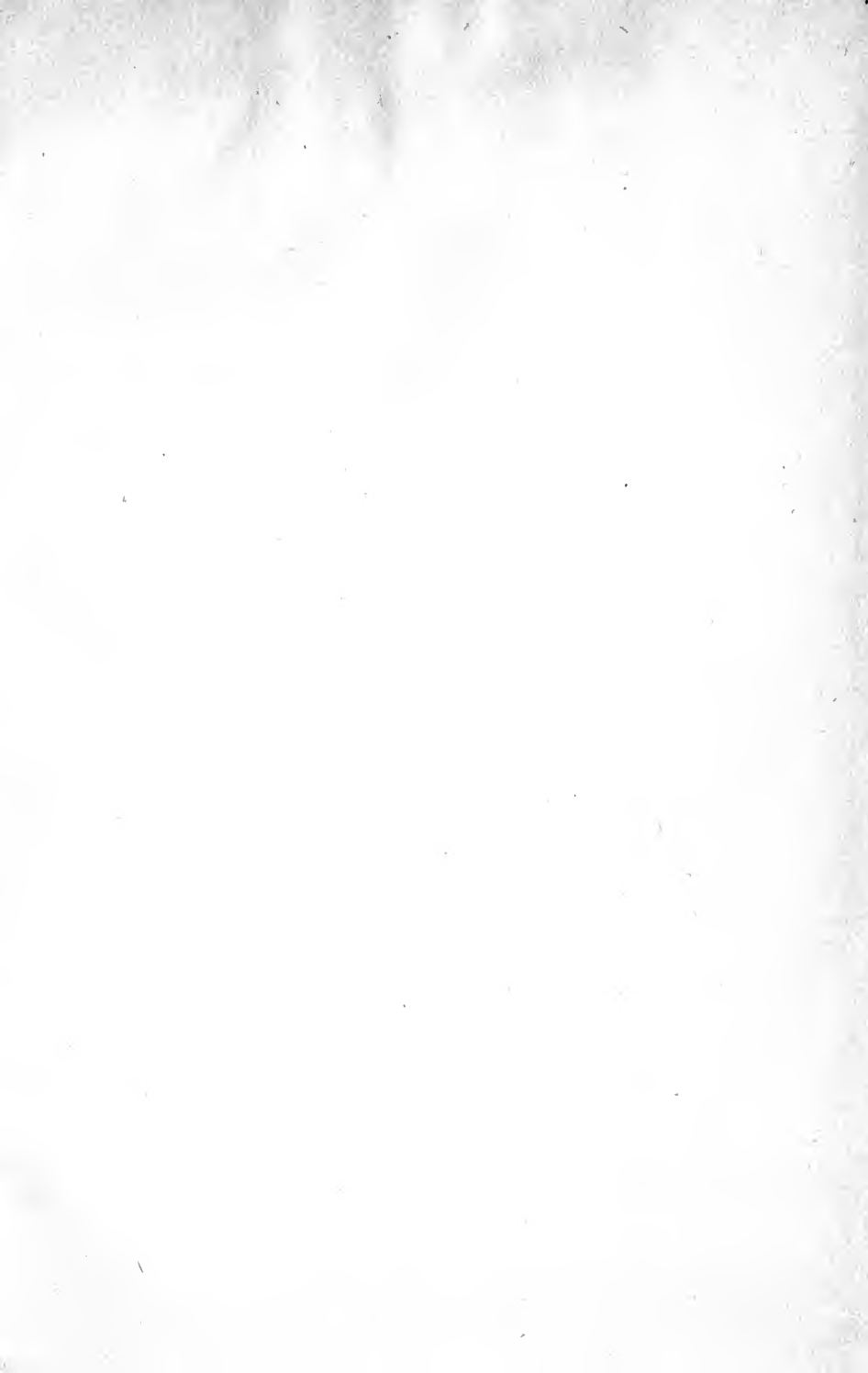
"My God is the justice of sunlight unhindered  
by power or pelf,

"And vast beyond all and inclusive of all  
things, my God is Myself!"

**FINIS.**







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